

PLAYERS NOW APPEARING ON AND NEAR BROADWAY



Theatrical War Is On

The Rialto Cannot Make Out Whether Shuberts Are Taking Paris of K. & E. or Making a Vain Attack on Verdun

This story ought to be written in two columns side by side.

The first column would contain about one thousand words expressing the joy of the Shuberts at having gained during the past week the bookings of three producers who were formerly independent. The other column of the deadly parallel would contain the only announcement that Klaw & Erlanger were willing to give out: "We have nothing to say."

During the last few days of last week the Rialto was in a turmoil. The theatrical war seemed to have begun in earnest, and the Shubert offensive appeared to have been successful. Yesterday the announcement came from the Shubert lines that the only neutrals left that they cared to win to their side were Cohan and Harris and Belasco. The rest of the so-called independents, they declared, have no plays that they want.

An interesting feature of the war is the attitude of Cohan and Harris. They seem to be in the happiest position of all. Their situation seems to be much the same as that of Greece in the great world conflict, except that there are two kings. Sam Harris insisted yesterday that, if the Shuberts had money enough, Cohan and Harris would be perfectly willing to book with them. Cohan, however, always having his little joke, insisted that they were seriously thinking of forming a third syndicate.

"Is this third syndicate idea serious?" we asked, as we left.

"It is as far as I'm concerned," replied Cohan, "but I can't convince Sam that it's a good idea—not yet."

When it comes to would-be diplomacy and politics the present theatrical situation has nothing on the intercourse between nations. The matters given out for publication are probably quite the contrary of the truth. There are spies and contre-espionage secret.

Marionettes a Real Broadway Attraction

Owing to the success which has attended their presentation, Tony Sarg's Marionettes will go into the evening bill at the Norworth Theatre, beginning next Monday night. Produced at first privately, next at the Neighborhood Playhouse and finally at the Norworth Theatre, they now find themselves arrayed in the ranks of full-fledged Broadway attractions. The popularity of the Marionettes has steadily increased at the Norworth, not only as a decided theatrical novelty, but in the dramatic appeal of the plays themselves. It was this steady growth of interest that induced Mr. Sarg to put the Marionettes into the Norworth for all evening and matinee performances. Four plays will be presented—"The Green Suit," "The Green Suit," "A Stolen Beauty" and "The Grotto Jewel." Matinees will be given Monday, Wednesday and Saturday at 8:00 o'clock and evening performances will begin at 8:45 o'clock.

Last of "Blind Youth"

Monday will begin the last week of the engagement of Lou Tellegen in "Blind Youth," at the Thirty-ninth Street Theatre. Saturday night marked the one hundredth performance of his New York run, which began at the Republic Theatre, and owing to that theatre's prior bookings, was continued at the Thirty-ninth. In the last decade the midweek matinee of New York theatres has fallen off to such an extent that the managers have almost universally reduced prices to encourage the attendance. But with Tellegen the capacity sign has been constantly displayed. His youth and distinction have appealed emphatically to the younger set of theatre lovers.

agents who are working one against the other underneath what the public sees.

There are, however, persons on the inside, as usual, who are willing to talk, who can't avoid talking; and the impression on the Rialto seems to be that the Shuberts have very much the upper hand. Every one admits that there may be a Battle of the Marne coming, but all insist that present conditions indicate that the Shuberts are taking the Paris of K. & E. It would seem that the K. & E. government has fled to Bordeaux when it makes the announcement: "We have nothing to say."

The facts in the case at the present moment are these:

The Shuberts have made a contract with Al Woods to produce a certain number of his plays in Shubert theatres when they go on the road.

The Selwyns have done the same thing. They had certain theatres building for which, it is said, they needed funds. The gossip on Broadway indicates that the Shuberts "came across" with the needed extra money and the Selwyns, in return, agreed to book a certain number of plays in Shubert theatres. Gossip, however, leaves the proviso that none of the managers need book more than the stated number of plays with the Shuberts. Any number in excess may be placed anywhere, so says Mrs. Grundy.

Oliver Morosco is the third ally of the week. But the only alliance he has made with the Shuberts appears to be his willingness to produce jointly with them a comedy called "The Blue Pearl," by Anne Crawford Flexner. Still, it seems to be the straw that shows which way the wind blows.

The question in the minds of theatrical people is: Is it the Battle of the Marne or will there come a counter attack at Verdun?

A. C. S.

Actors in Musical Comedy

Musical comedy isn't so bad as it's painted, if we are to believe the word of the four recruits who are appearing in "Oh, Lady! Lady!" at the Princess. All of them, up to last week, had spent their time in dramatic productions. They had more or less misgivings about musical comedy, but their work in the Princess production has pleased them mightily.

The fact that four of the principals in "Oh, Lady! Lady!" have never appeared in musical comedy before is quite unusual. They are Constance Binney, Margaret Dale, Reginald Mason and Harry C. Browne.

"I used to have the idea that musical comedy was low and vulgar," said Miss Binney, whose particular forte is toe dancing. "I had been with Winthrop Ames for some time, and somehow I had come to look down on musical comedy. But now that I am right in it I see how mistaken I was. There is just as much chance for the development of artistic work there as anywhere else."

Margaret Dale has found less change in her work than the others. She does not sing or dance, but she is enjoying the work thoroughly.

"I feel that you must put everything you have into your part, even if it's only fifteen minutes long," she said. "And my new work in musical comedy interests me just as much as though it were in a dramatic play, and for that very reason."

Harry C. Browne had much the same idea. "My motto," he declared, "is that you

must make everything happen for the best, and not make the best of everything that happens. And I feel that I have done that in coming into musical comedy. I love the new work, and shouldn't be surprised if I stuck to it the rest of my life now that I really know what it's like."

Reginald Mason, who is playing Cyril Twombly, the detective, was the most enthusiastic of all.

"When I heard of an opportunity to get into musical comedy I jumped at it. I like any new experience. But, now that I have had a taste of the work, I'm crazy about it. It has been an eye-opener. Contrary to my expectations, the company here is just like a great big family. Everybody is willing and anxious to help everybody else."

A Realistic Version Of "The Sea Wolf"

Hobart Bosworth, in his dramatic version of Jack London's "The Sea Wolf," in Keith vaudeville, succeeds in bringing to the stage all of the London life and virility and makes the playlet as grippingly interesting as the book, and few books obtain the popularity that Jack London's "The Sea Wolf" has had. Mr. Bosworth has utilized the London story in film, where it was generally conceded to be one of the very best feature pictures ever screened, and in the dramatization he has succeeded in retaining all of the picturesqueness of the film, while the dialogue, which is exceedingly forcible, makes "The Sea Wolf" a living thing.

Hobart Bosworth is known as one of the best character actors of the day. He has given innumerable fine characterizations, but none to equal his Wolf Larsen. Most everybody is familiar with the Jack London story. Mr. Bosworth begins it with a bit of film, showing the rescue at sea of Maud Brewster, with the curtain going up on a sectional view of the Ghost, the tramp ship Wolf Larsen commands. The Wolf's infatuation for the girl, his brutal insistence and ultimate death are told in the sketch as they are in the book, and the telling is tense drama.

Mr. Bosworth, taking the part of "The Sea Wolf," the strong, masterful brute, is a living reproduction of the London creation. In appearance and action he is a figure that carries a certain sympathetic strain, despite or possibly because of the brutal strength of the character. The scene on the deck of the Ghost, with its swinging boom, its pilot wheel and other ship appurtenances, is especially realistic, while the scene in the master's cabin fairly speaks of the sea.

Florence Enright to Play in "Petticoats"

Florence Enright, of The Washington Square Players, has been lent to the Shuberts to play the leading woman's part in Cyril Harcourt's play "Petticoats," in which Norman Trevor is to appear. Miss Enright has been with The Washington Square Players since their organization and has played a wide range of parts with them.

When she was offered the part in "Petticoats" it was arranged that she could accept it, as "Youth," the three-act play which is to go on at the Comedy Theatre next Wednesday night, has only two women's parts and they are to be played by Marjorie Vonnegut and Helen Westley.



In "The Sea Wolf," in Vaudeville.

Facts About Players

"Success," in which Brandon Tynan is now appearing at the Harris Theatre, adds one more to the long list of plays about the theatre and stage folk that have met with popular approval. It really isn't because the producers think that the stage and its life and people have any special fascination for the outside world that so many stage plays are produced. The fact of the matter, as explained by one of the Lieblers, who produced "Success," is that a play about stage people gives the authors an opportunity to paint their picture in a bold way.

In dealing with people who live by keeping their emotions alive, who capitalize their charm—and charm has been called weakness—the playwright is permitted to deal in emotions in an elemental way. He is unhampered by the necessity of cloaking the feelings of his characters with the usages of society, but is able to evoke the responsive chords from his audience by speaking to them in a tongue that cannot be misunderstood. An actor wears his heart upon his sleeve, for the daws to peck at if they will.

There was a time when the direct appeal to the audience's emotions was quite permissible—in fact desirable in any kind of a play. To-day, when accurate portrayal of the conditions of everyday life is the thing chiefly desired, dissembling the emotions to a certain extent is obligatory, just as it is in the life about us. But this direct appeal to the heart is as welcome as ever if it can be made without offense to the intelligence of the auditor. For this reason the playwright, who deals with high strung, impulsive people, is privileged to draw tears and laughs from his audience in the good, old-fashioned way.

There is another reminder of the old-fashioned play in "Success." Everybody remembers when the orchestra played "Hearts and Flowers" during the sentimental scene of a play. Then came the discovery that acting could be done more effectively against music than with its aid. But nowadays incidental music is taboo unless it can be "planted" in such a way that it can be accounted for naturally.

In "Success," in the third act, in the green room of the theatre on the night of an important premiere, such music is used with splendid effect, the practice device being that of an orchestra tuning up under the stage. The presence of the orchestra, "planted" early in the act, makes possible the use of the music in a plausible way.

"Garden of Allah" Again

Morris Gest announces that the next attraction at the Manhattan Opera House, following "Old Lady 31," on February 25, will be "The Garden of Allah." The production is intact in every detail, just as it was presented at the Century for the most successful season in the history of that palatial playhouse, until the present management took charge. Since leaving the Century "The Garden of Allah" has toured this country and Canada, scoring record runs in all the principal cities, but has never been seen anywhere else in Greater New York.

Berlin on the Job

Irving Berlin has written a new song which will be sung at the Actors' Fund Benefit at the Century Theatre Friday afternoon, March 1, by Sidney Jarvis and a chorus of 100 of the prettiest girls from the various musical comedies, and 100 United States marines.

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